



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**CYPRUS**

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## **“Eco-Day” Village Festival Attracts Thousands**

An estimated 3,000 people came together to celebrate Cyprus’ rich and varied cultural heritage and its natural environment at the “Once Upon a Time” festival in Buyukkonuk/Komi Kebir. The festival was part of the community’s larger efforts to promote eco-tourism in the Karpaz region, where Cyprus’ traditional ways and natural beauty are under threat by modern influences and mass tourism. Visitors enjoyed folk dancing and music; traditional foods; donkey rides; a photography exhibit; demonstrations of traditional bread, cheese, macaroni, carob syrup and sweets making; and several other activities, including the inauguration of hiking and cycling trails that will guide visitors through some of Cyprus’ most breathtaking landscapes. The festival and the community’s efforts to promote responsible tourism development were supported by USAID through the Economic Development and Growth for Enterprises (EDGE) and Supporting Activities that Value the Environment (SAVE) projects.



## **Youth as Peace Builders in a Multicultural Society**

Youth are more future oriented, open-to-change, idealistic, innovative, courageous, and knowledgeable about their peers’ realities than adults, making them key players in peace building in a multicultural society. This theme was underscored at the ACT-funded international conference, “The Potential of Youth to Build Peace in a Multicultural Society,” organized by the International Child Development Initiatives.



The conference featured international speakers who shared success stories of their work in youth peace building activities around the globe, including the Netherlands, South America and Northern Ireland. Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot youth from local peace building initiatives participated in a plenary discussion about youth’s role in building peace in Cyprus. With more than 150 international attendees, the conference successfully accomplished its goal—to share ideas and strategies for bringing youth to the forefront of peace building activities.

*The mission of USAID/Cyprus is to encourage cooperation between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot individuals and organizations to reduce tensions and promote a climate that will foster reconciliation and a durable peace settlement.*

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*SAVE*

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SAVE hosted the grand opening of the renovated traditional Olive Mill at the Buyukkonuk/Komi Kibir “Once Upon a Time” festival on May 18. The Olive Mill will be managed by HASDER, a local non-profit organization dedicated to preserving cultural heritage and handicrafts. On International Museums Day, SAVE launched its Famagusta Walking Tour brochure, promoting Famagusta as a unique “outdoor museum.” Work continues on the GIS/Land Use Planning activity, including with the data provided by additional offices. Through a small grant and along with Hellenic Bank, GreenDot Industries (a local recycling firm), and the Municipality of Nicosia, SAVE sponsored the International Group on Organizations and the Natural Environment conference organized in Nicosia by the University of Cyprus.

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*EDGE*

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EDGE played a key role in briefing the EU Commission team that is preparing the bi-annual EU report on the status of trade across the Green Line and the governing Green Line Trade Regulation. EDGE supported the Buyukkonuk Eco-Village Committee in organizing and implementing the very successful “Once Upon A Time” festival in their village. As part of those efforts, EDGE developed and published a brochure highlighting the village as a niche tourism destination and worked with the local authorities and local businesses to organize a network of hiking and cycling trails in the surrounding mountains, the first of which was inaugurated as part of the May 18 event. On May 22, EDGE hosted a meeting that included USAID, the Embassy and the TC Banks Association to discuss ongoing training initiatives and other EDGE activities related to the banking sector.

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*ACT*

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Nilda Bullain from the European Center of Not-For-Profit Law presented the results of the “Assessment Report of the Legal and Regulatory Framework Affecting NGOs in the Republic of Cyprus” to a large audience including representatives from NGOs and the Planning Bureau. The report detailed the challenges that Cypriot Civil Society faces and the legal restructuring that is taking place. A collaborative group of research centers held a workshop to analyze issues regarding biodiversity, environmental changes and problems, and pedagogical approaches towards environmental education. The International Childhood and Youth Research Network held their first International Conference, “Child and Youth Research in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A Critical Appraisal,” May 28-29. The conference brought together more than 150 international scholars, policy-makers, and practitioners from more than 40 countries and included a total of 157 presentations, grouped in 46 different sessions focusing on topics ranging from child poverty to children and the internet to children as researchers.

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*REAP*

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On May 26<sup>th</sup>, the REAP-supported Energy Professionals Association organized a seminar for its members on renewable energy implementations in the Turkish Cypriot community. Two members of the association presented on small scale biogas digesters and solar collectors tracing the sun. Members of the association discussed applicability of renewable energy in the TCC.



*Once a central part of village life, this olive mill in Buyukkonuk/Komi Kebir was restored as an excellent example of traditional Cypriot mud brick architecture. This site and its exhibits aim to increase the awareness of residents and visitors alike regarding the importance of preserving Cyprus' rich cultural heritage for future generations.*

## News from Nicosia

**May 23**

President Demetris Christofias and Turkish Cypriot Leader Mehmet Ali Talat met to discuss the progress of the ongoing working groups and technical committees. In a joint statement, the leaders reaffirm their commitment to finding a negotiated settlement and agreed to meet again in the coming months.

## OUR PROJECTS

- The **Action for Cooperation and Trust (ACT)** program mainstreams the concepts of conflict resolution in over 120 projects that encourage Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to work on issues of common concern and solve problems together. Projects are currently underway in the areas of youth, education and tolerance, civil society strengthening, sustainable development and cultural heritage preservation. ACT is funded through a cooperative agreement between USAID and the UN Development Program (UNDP).
- The **Cyprus Partnership for Economic Growth (CyPEG)** includes activities that support economic growth in the Turkish Cypriot community to decrease the disparities between the communities and promote reconciliation. CyPEG is implemented by U.S. contractors under different USAID contract mechanisms.
  - The objective of the **Economic Development and Growth for Enterprises (EDGE)** project is to strengthen the domestic and international competitiveness of Turkish-Cypriot small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and help restructure the financial sector so that SMEs can thrive.
  - The **Resource Efficiency Achievement Program (REAP)** promotes more efficient use of water and energy by conducting audits and upgrades of representative business establishments and households. REAP also provides technical assistance to Turkish Cypriot energy experts.
  - The **Supporting Activities that Value the Environment (SAVE)** project focuses on improving (1) the competitiveness, financial status, and quality of basic services and infrastructure to more easily meet international and EU standards and (2) Turkish Cypriot capacity to manage natural and cultural resources for economic growth.